

VII. Bicycle

Introduction

As required by federal regulation, the MRCOG-MPO is addressing this important mode of transportation in the 2030 MTP 23 CFR 450.322 (b) (1). For the first time the 2025 MTP provided an extensive section on bicycle regional planning. With the adoption of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991 and the subsequent federal transportation bills, bicycle planning and implementation was accelerated. The Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning area has experienced a tremendous momentum in bikeway construction and funding opportunities. This has resulted in an extensive bikeway network in the region.

Background

Even though the Future Albuquerque Area Bikeways and Streets (FAABS) document and process has attended to address some regional bikeway elements, there is not yet a regional bicycle plan or regional standards. Municipalities have approached bikeway planning in different ways through the years and have relied on the Long Range Bikeway System map for local planning. Updating this map has been an exercise that has responded primarily to local programmatic needs in the short-term and has had no fiscal constraint considerations for the future. Proposed alignments have been identified without a comprehensive, land use and multimodal planning analysis. The FAABS document and its products have been integrated.

The City of Albuquerque and the County of Bernalillo adopted the Trails and Bikeways Facility Plan in 1993. This plan established long-range policies for off-street multiuse trails and bicycle facilities. The Albuquerque Comprehensive On-Street Bicycle Plan was adopted by the City of Albuquerque in 2000. Both documents are multi-jurisdictional planning efforts between two major municipalities in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area (AMPA).

The following bikeway type definitions will be used in this element and its products:

- Bicycle Trail/Path – is a paved off-street facility designated by signs and pavement markings for the primary use of bicycles. Cross-flows by motor vehicles is minimized. Facilities may accommodate pedestrian or other non-motorized users.
- Bicycle Lane – is a bicycle facility that is located in a portion of a roadway facility. A lane is designated by pavement markings for the exclusive or semi-exclusive use of bicycles. Through travel by motor vehicles or pedestrians is prohibited, but pedestrian and motorist cross flows are permitted. Vehicle parking may be allowed. Lanes are usually along the right edge of the roadway but may be designated to the left of parking or right-turn lanes.
- Bicycle Route – is a bicycle facility located in a roadway and designated by signs as available for bicycle travel. Routes may be shared with pedestrians or motorists. No special on-pavement markings are provided.

Table 1 shows the number of bikeway miles in the AMPA that have been developed since 1974. The number of miles of bikeway facilities far surpasses what was proposed

in 1974.¹ Although this accomplishment is an important asset to the region, accessibility, connectivity, safety and a continuous network are still challenges today.

	Table VII 1: Number of Bikeway Miles by Functional Class				
Facility	1974 Proposed	1980 Existing	2000 Existing	2004 Existing	2030 Proposed
Lane	60.1	12.8	94.4	124.2	285.7
Route	54.4	86.9	107.8	109.5	185.2
Trails	88.3	14.6	91.7	104.8	293.2
Total	202.8	114.2 *	293.9	338.5	764.1

The AMPA's bikeway network in 2004 consisted of approximately 124.2 centerline miles of bike lanes, 104.8 miles of off-road trails and paths, and 109.5 miles of bike routes. Map 1 shows the bikeway base year network or 2004 bikeway network by functional class. The number of centerline miles of bicycle facilities will increase to approximately 764.1. The number of centerline miles of bikeways more than doubles the number of miles existing in 2004.

Map 1 shows the 2004 bikeway network by type of facility. This map helps to visualize the base year (or starting point) for the 2030 MTP development of this planning element.

Issues

Issues associated with incorporating bicycle needs in the long range transportation plan include but are not limited to:

- Provide sufficient funding to develop and maintain, connected, continuous and safe bicycle transportation systems for travel between and within urban centers and surrounding communities.
- Identify high frequency bicycle related crash locations and improvements to address safety concerns in these locations through education, enforcement, and engineering.
- Emphasize bicycle investments that provide attractive alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel.
- Promote the development of street patterns and street designs that are highly supportive of bicycle convenience and safety – particularly for travel to transit stops, schools, jobs, stores, parks, and other destinations.
- Implement bicycle and pedestrian facilities in all new and improved transportation projects (as recommended by the 2000 FHWA Policy and Design Guidance).
- Plan, design, and build bicycle facilities in accordance with the best practices described in the latest editions of the AASHTO *Guide for the development of Bicycle Facilities*.
- Collect data and develop methods and analytical tools to monitor and determine the effectiveness of the existing and future bikeway projects and programs.

¹ The Bikeway Study, City of Albuquerque, 1974.

In accordance with 23 USC 217 (g), the metropolitan transportation plan needs to identify bicycle transportation facilities. The plan needs to include long range and short range strategies/ actions taken that facilitate the movement of people and goods. The long range refers to the horizon of the MTP (usually 20 years at least) and the short-range to the transportation improvement program (TIP) horizon. The TIP shall only include projects that are consistent with the metropolitan transportation plan (23 CFR 450.324 (f) (2)).

The Metropolitan Planning Organization staff has been working in cooperation, coordination, and consultation with member agencies, advocacy groups, and the general public in identifying regional bicycle needs and how to address them. An important role in this process has been played by the regional Walking and Bicycling Advisory Group (WABAG). This is a regional group that provides advice to the MPO committee structure on bicycle and pedestrian issues and meets once a month. The group has produced different recommendations regarding bicycling needs and proposed ways to address accessibility, connectivity, safety, design, and funding concerns (see section IV.A of this draft document).

The planning process has resulted in identifying what is on the ground and what is committed in the current transportation improvement program. This process identifies of where the gaps or disconnects in the bikeway system exist. The following question is how these gaps relate to destinations and how safe it is to reach those destinations.

Because the plan is fiscally constrained, not all projects and programs submitted will be implemented. Establishing priorities becomes a major challenge for the region given the magnitude and type of the needs in relation to the estimated revenues.

The following maps reflect steps taken during the development of the 2030 MTP bikeway network and the list of bikeway projects submitted for consideration. In addition, two maps will result from this planning process: one map and list of projects reflecting the bikeway projects that meet the plan requirements and a second map that is considered the unconstrained bikeway network. The unconstrained bikeway network map could be considered as a proposed target network to address the regional needs in the future.

Existing plus Committed

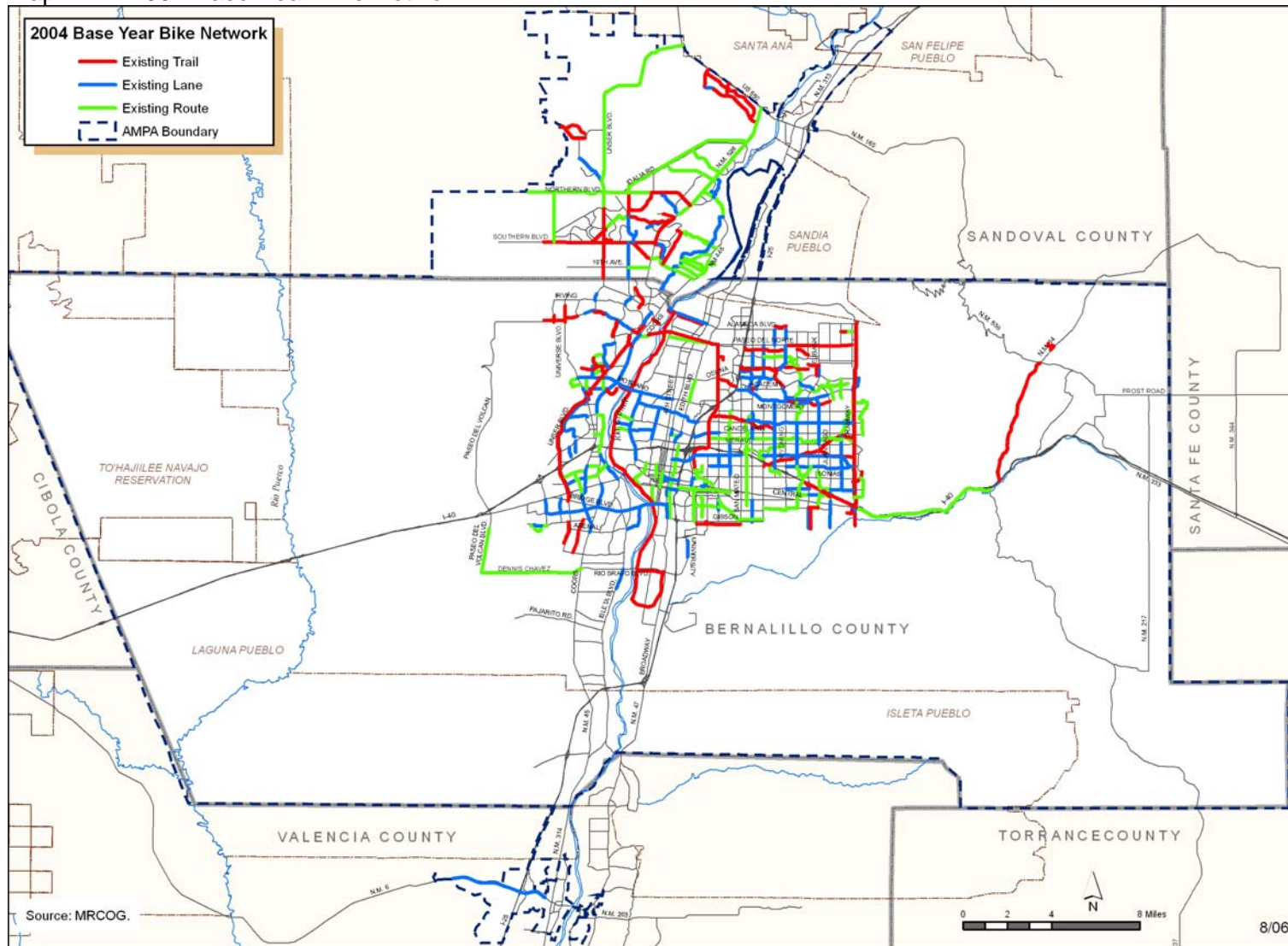
Map 2 presents the existing plus bikeway projects included in the current Transportation Improvement Program 2006-2011 overlaying the land use that is forecasted by the year 2030. The map shows bikeway networks associated with the projected areas of urban growth in the region as well as the gaps in the bikeway networks. A single color has been used to simplify the visual analysis, and a different line thickness has been used to differentiate the type of facility.

Map 3 provides a more refined picture of the bikeway network. It is more refined because it relates off-street bicycle facilities to major employment centers in the region. Off-street facilities are considered by some users as a safer, more convenient, and pleasant alternative (especially for the novice rider) to ride for recreational purposes or for commuting to work. This perception is associated with bicycle trails and not much with bicycle paths (bicycle trail adjacent to roadways). It is recognized that bicycle trails

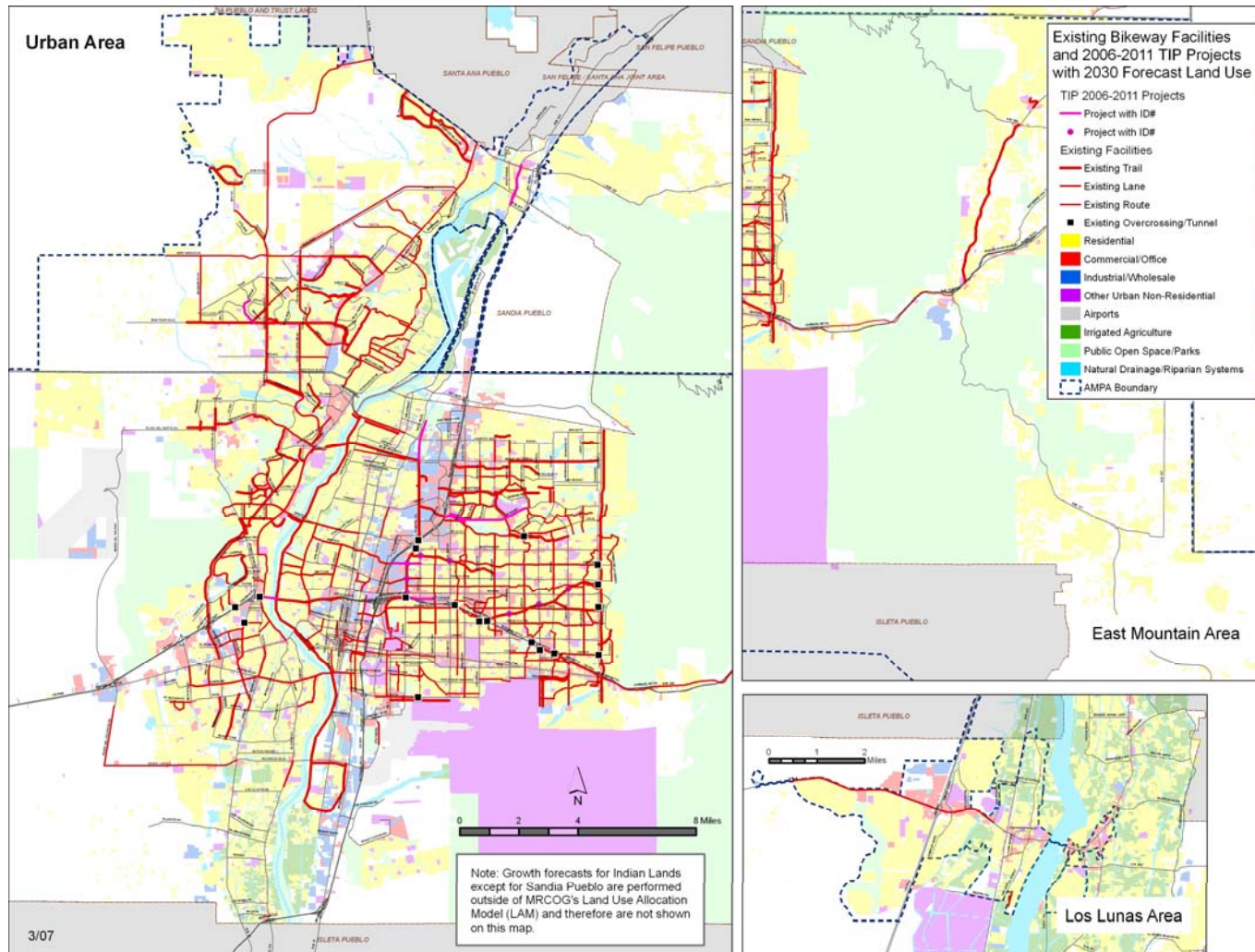
adjacent to roads (bicycle paths) actually cause greater conflicts between other modes of transportation because the present of access points (driveways, parking lots, other roads) along the trail alignment.

Map 3 clearly highlights the gaps within the off-street network in the AMPA. The map relates existing bicycle trails to major regional activity centers.

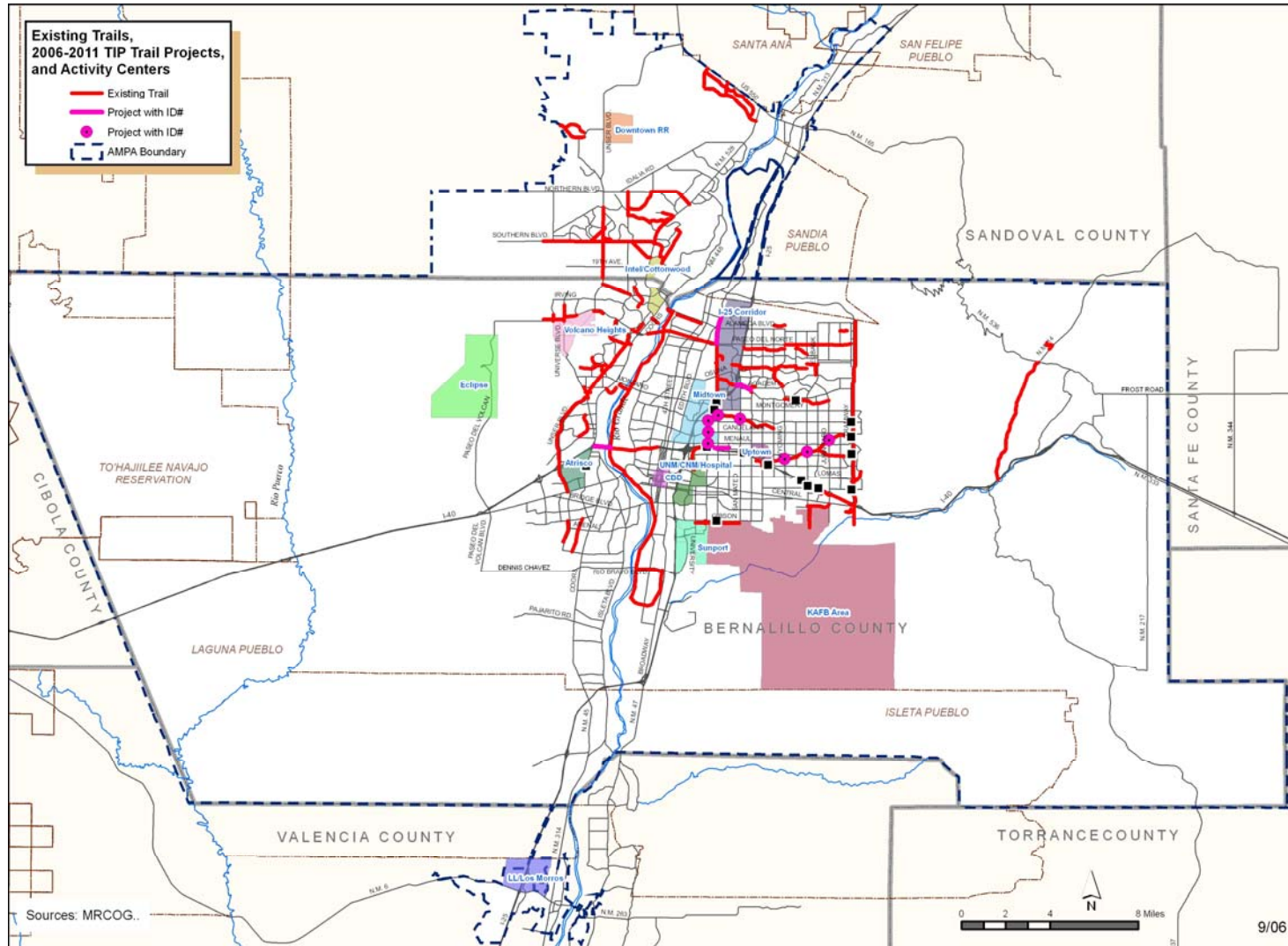
Map VII-1: 2004 Base Year Bike Network



Map VII-2: Existing Bikeway Facilities, 2006-2011 TIP Projects and 2030 Forecast Land Use



Map VII-3: Existing Trails 2006-2011 TIP Trail Projects and Activity Centers



The 2030 MTP bikeway projects

The fiscally constrained list of projects and map has been created as a result of close consultation and coordination with member agencies. All these projects and programs meet the fiscally constrained requirement as established by (23 CFR 450.320).

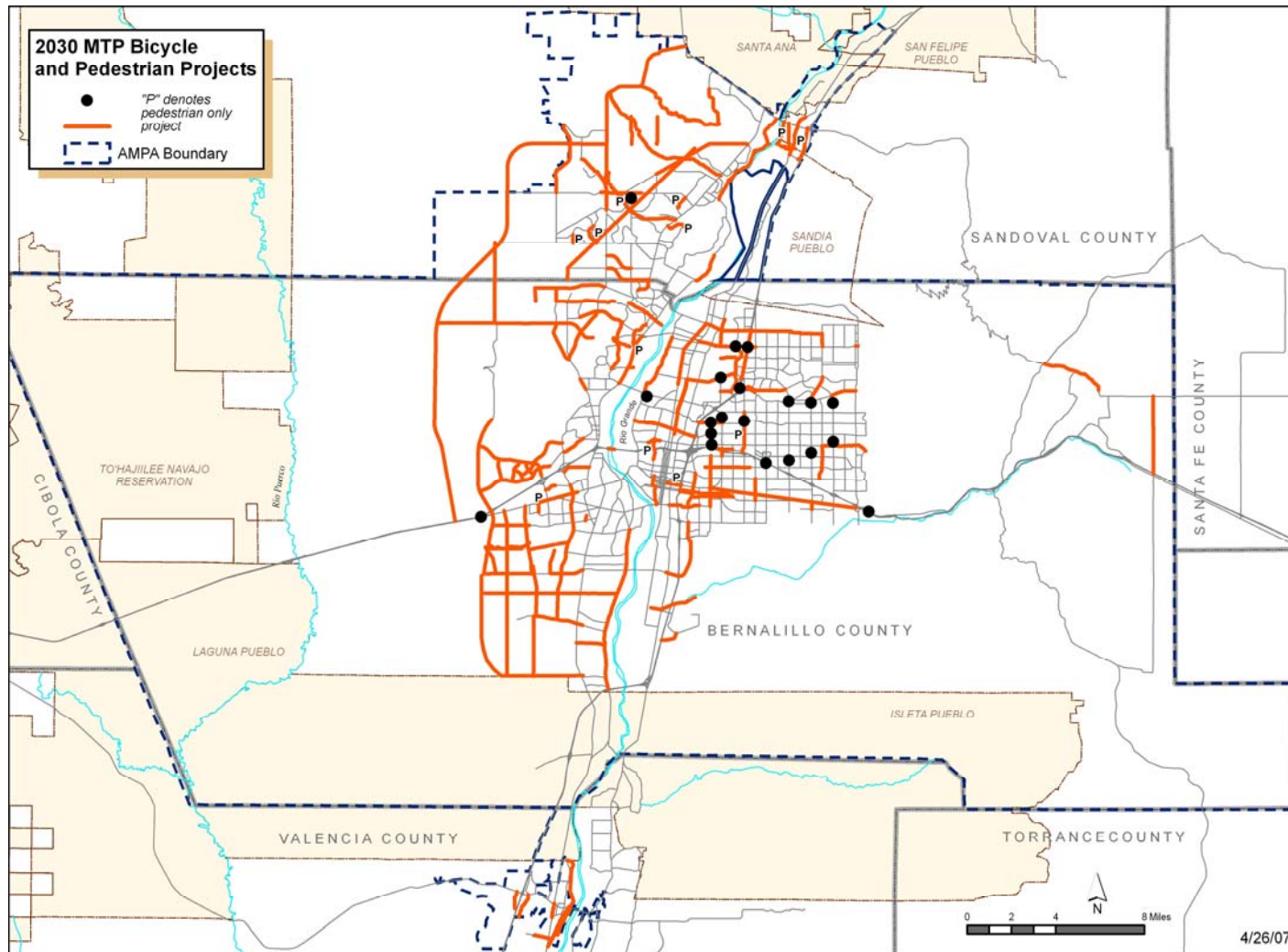
The primary reference to identify transportation projects and programs should be the list on Appendix A, B, C, and D and not exclusively the map. The tables provide a great detail of detail about the projects and programs. Some projects might not be shown on the map because an alignment or site has not yet been determined. Map 4 shows all 2030 MTP fiscally constrained bicycle and pedestrian projects. Pedestrian projects have been identified by the letter "P".

The Long Range Bikeway System Map

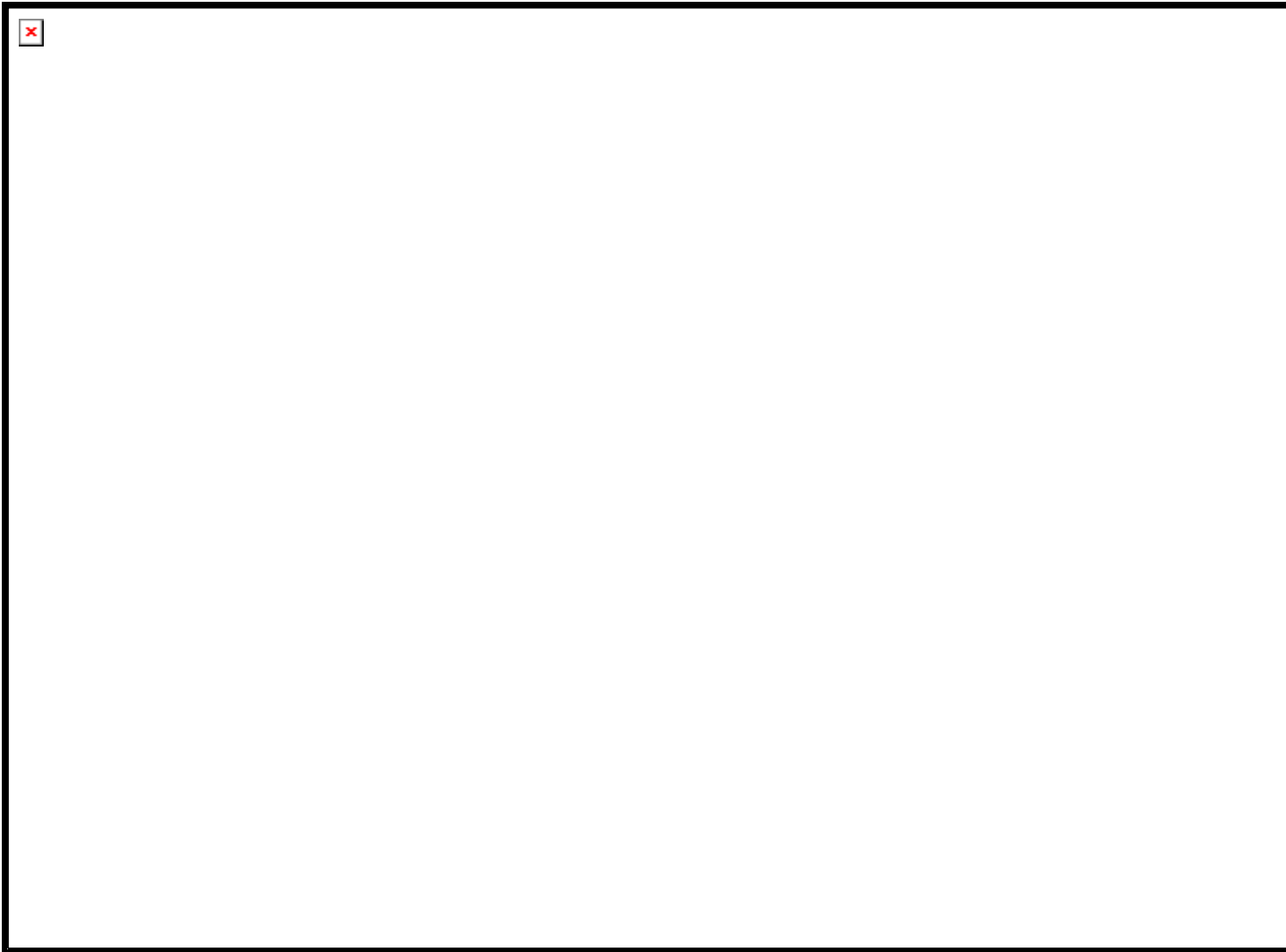
The Long Range Bikeway System (LRBS) map (see map 5) has served as an important reference planning function in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area. The map is now part of the MTP as explained in Chapter II of this document (page II-22). The map identifies the geographic distribution of bikeway facilities in the region. It includes existing and proposed (for the future) bikeway facilities by functional class.

The map also shows bikeway corridors. A corridor is an area where bikeway facilities are being considered but the feasibility of a facility or the specific type of facility has not yet been determined. These facilities are anticipated to be eligible for Federal transportation funding, but final determination has not been taken. The map will be updated administratively every year to reflect updates in the bikeway network.

Map VII-4: 2030 MTP Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects



Map VII-5: Long Range Bikeway System Map



The City of Albuquerque TDM Program

This program has been developed and managed by the City of Albuquerque Department of Municipal Development. The program includes different elements that include bicycle lockers, plans, studies, ordinances, bicycle maps, bicycle way-finding, promotions, long-range planning activities, resource center, educational classes, and performance measures.

Many of these initiatives came as a result of cooperative and coordinated efforts between multiple city of Albuquerque agencies as well as private partners.

Bike Locker Program

The bicycle locker program provides secured bicycle parking in the form of bicycle lockers to Metro area businesses interested in providing this service to their employees. This service is provided at no charge to the business. The lockers remain the property of the city and are located by way of a location agreement between the city and the business. Lockers are assigned to an individual user. Users submit a Use Agreement and provide a \$10 key deposit. Approximately 100 lockers are installed per year.

Research to find the most versatile locker available for the anticipated variety of locations took place in the initial phase of the program. A small number of lockers were ordered initially to peak interest in the program and to familiarize installation crews with the product and a variety of installation scenarios. Marketing of the program to date has been in cooperation with the city's Transit Department and a number of community partners that participate in other programs offered by Transit. It is anticipated that additional marketing efforts will be necessary in the future. However, this marketing effort has enabled the bicycle locker program to reach the anticipated number of locker installations at 100 lockers per year.



Plans, Ordinances, and Studies

Plans

The Bicycle TDM program administrator currently supports administration of the city's Comprehensive On-Street Bicycle Plan. The plan was approved in November of 2000.

The Bicycle TDM Administrator will have an active role in subsequent plan update efforts.

Ordinances

The Albuquerque Comprehensive On-Street Bicycle Plan contains provisions for a Bicycle End-of-Trip Facilities Ordinance. The ordinance was intended to supplement current bicycle parking by requiring new developments in Albuquerque to provide secure employee bicycle parking. Status: The ordinance was passed by the City Council in March of 2003 and vetoed by the City Mayor in April of 2003.

Studies

The Bicycle TDM Program funds are used to conduct studies of arterial and collector corridors that are candidates for inclusion of bicycle facilities. The studies are to determine the potential impacts to existing traffic. The studies determine if existing street sections can accommodate bicycle lanes or if a reduction of vehicle lanes is possible while maintaining a reasonable level of service. A study of the University Boulevard corridor (a six lane section) between Lomas Boulevard and Coal Avenue is a recent example of this approach.

Bike Map

The Metropolitan Albuquerque Bicycle Map is the single source of information available, free of charge, to the public that provides information regarding the multitude of bicycle related programs offered by the City of Albuquerque. The bicycle map also provides bicycling information for the entire metropolitan area. Production of the bicycle map and subsequent updates is an undertaking that requires a great deal of coordination and information gathering from all of the jurisdictions, agencies and organizations in the metropolitan area supporting bicycle programs. The map contains information regarding additional programs for other alternative transportation options available in the metropolitan area including, the bicycles on bus program offered by the City Transit Department, and the soon to be included Rail Runner policies for bringing bicycles on the train.

The map is updated every two years, or as needed depending on the amount of information change that takes place over time. The map is distributed to all area bicycle shops and is available at city library locations, and city facilities with information centers. The map is also used as a marketing tool and is widely distributed by Transit Department's Business Partnership program.

- Print and disseminate approximately 60,000 maps per year
- Map Design and regular updates
- Bicycle map request line
- Bike map e-mail request (bikemap@cabq.gov)
- Distribution to Bicycle Shops, Transit, Libraries, Parks

Bike Way-Finding

In order to bring information to the facilities and to accommodate route planning for bicycle commuters and recreational users on site, the city has begun to implement a way-finding system of bicycle maps at locations where on-street bicycle facilities intersect within the paved multi-use trail system. The map locations have a two sided platform with a detailed vicinity map showing an approximate three mile radius from the location on one side and the bicycle map for the entire city on the other. It is anticipated that this program will be eventually be expanded to provide rest stop accommodations at select locations. Potential improvements include benches, water fountains, and shade structures.



- Street signs/trail signs at intersections of on-street bicycle facilities and multi-use trails

Way-finding Signage

- Bicycle map signs at intersections of multi-use trails

Promotions

The Bicycle TDM program utilizes a number of methods to promote various aspects of bicycle commuting and associated programs offered by the city.

The city produces television “Bike to Work” PSAs (Public Service Announcements) to encourage citizens to consider bicycle commuting as an alternative to driving. In order to promote safe commuting on the part of bicyclists and automobile drivers alike, the city is in the process of producing “Safe Commuting” PSAs geared toward each group.

The city recently began participating in the League of American Bicyclists “Bicycle Friendly Community Campaign”. The Bicycle TDM program was the lead program for coordinating this effort. The campaign requires an application process that outlines all of the bicycle related programs being implemented by the city. The application process requires a great deal of coordination between the various departments in the city associated with bicycle related programs. The applications are submitted to the League where a review takes place to determine the level (Platinum, Gold, Silver, or Bronze) the community will receive for its efforts. In October of 2005, the City of Albuquerque received a Bronze level award. Along with the award the League offers suggestions for becoming more bicycle friendly and steps to take to reach the next level.

The city maintains a Bicycle web page www.cabq.gov/bike that includes bicycle related information regarding city programs as well as links to other useful information regarding bicycle commuting.

Other methods of promoting bicycle commuting to the public include articles in local News Papers, Utility Mailers, and participation in Transportation Fairs.

The city’s bicycle map, discussed earlier, is considered to be one of the most effective promotional tools for bicycle programs. The map is distributed at no cost in a variety of ways. The maps are provided to all area bicycle shops, at all Transportation related activities and mailed to the public by phone or e-mail request.

Long Range Planning Activities

The Bicycle TDM Program Manager is involved in a number of planning activities at the local and regional level. The following list represents the level of involvement in these planning efforts.

- Participation in WABAG (Walking and Bicycling Advisory Committee) process
- Participation in GABAC (Greater Albuquerque Bicycling Advisory Committee) process
- Participation in GARTC (Greater Albuquerque Recreational Trails Committee) process
- FAABS Future Albuquerque Area Bikeway System
- Albuquerque Comprehensive On-Street Bicycle Plan

Maintain a resource center

- Best Practices

- Design Information

Adult Bicycle Driver Education Classes

- Sponsor Effective Cycling Classes/Road 1 Course
- Street Skills Instruction Package (power point presentation) upcoming

Bike to work day Activities

- Coordination
- Promotional Item Purchases
- Media Promotions
- Activity Facility Costs

Performance Measures

- Census Information
- Traffic Counts
- Map Requests
- Locker Requests / Usage
- Bicycle to Work Day attendance
- Web page visits

Future Activities

- Expanded Bike Locker Program
- Corridor Studies
- Minor Construction of Connections

